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Institute of Architects*

MAY
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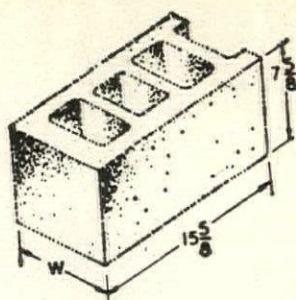
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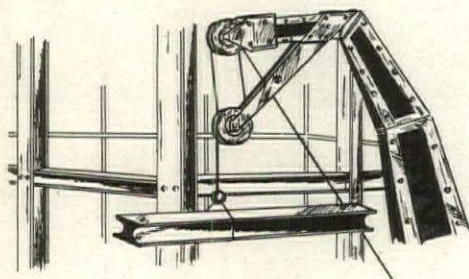
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MAY, 1951

NO. 10

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ARCHITEXTOPICS

By Eugene F. Magenan, A. I. A.

Senate Bill 9 has been killed by the House Committee on Executive Departments and Administration, after the Senate had passed it. Senator Stanley Brown, formerly one of the special state prosecutors of the Story-Cote case, had sponsored the bill, to improve that part of the Reorganization Act dealing with the Department of Public Works and Highways. It allows too much opportunity for future construction scandals and gives too much authority to the Department. However, his reforms were aimed at the law and not at the Department. Another two years under the present law may be needed to demonstrate the need for changing it, because as legislation it is far from perfect.

One of the weaknesses of the present law is that it would be possible, with the wrong personnel in charge, for the Department to develop into a state architectural bureau. A bill to establish such an office to design all state buildings, and to produce county school plans as well, was recently killed in a committee of the Maryland State Assembly. There the Baltimore Chapter of the A. I. A. lined up an impressive array of witnesses to contradict the "economy" claims of the bill's sponsors. Drawing upon previous experiences in New York and Alabama, where similar legislation had been proposed, they found their most difficult task was to find the true costs of architectural services rendered by a public bureau. Those who carried the burden of defeating the bill came out impressed that ignorance is the soil in which such legislative weeds take root, and facts are the tool that roots them out.

New Hampshire newspapers continue to publish pictures of architects' renderings or models without crediting their authors. It would seem that some means should be found for increasing public recognition and appreciation of the architect's role. One promising way has been adopted by the Pasadena Chapter of the A. I. A.—they held a competition among members, associates and students to get the best design for an identical sign to be used by members at jobs under construction.

Here is a tongue-twisting tid-bit that can't resist passing along: "..... the voluminous lexicographical tumefactions of Sa Johnson's verbal elephantiasis." This apropos of nothing although we are strongly reminded of the N. P. A. and other governmental regulations.

This is not a gossip column, but have you heard about the architect whose services were terminated by his client when his preliminary sketches turned out to be unacceptable; the client then offered to pay for his services to date but later refused when the architect submitted an exorbitant bill. Thereupon, the architect threatened to have the bill collected by the American Institute of Architects in Washington!

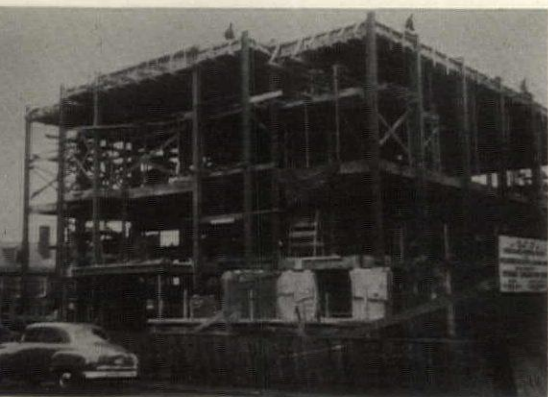
The A. I. A. does a lot of things for its members, but collection of bills is certainly not one of them.

If restrictions on private or non-defense building continue to get more severe, small architectural offices all over the country are threatened with extinction. The government and its defense agencies are locking up the big engineering firms with more work than they can handle, while the small firms starve. The competition for draftsmen in metropolitan centers is intense. Pirating of help is a common occurrence. Eventually those of us who live and work in God's country will have to close up shop and go to work for some huge outfit doing tasks that could be done just as well, or better, in our own offices. The policy is thoughtless and ruthless and expensive. The government should develop a way to channel small jobs, or parts of large jobs, to establish small firms in local communities. Or they should encourage the big engineering firms to farm out portions of their projects, either to individual small offices or associations of small offices. This is being done for small businesses and industries—why couldn't it be done for small architectural firms?

Some such step is particularly necessary in New Hampshire, which is largely a non-defense area, and which is so imbued with Yankee conservatism, or just plain lack of enterprise, that construction activity seems about to dwindle to the vanishing point. A glance at the construction news reports proves that construction projects are continuing with unabated vigor almost everywhere else—including our Yankee neighbors Vermont and Maine. Wake up, New Hampshire!

Construction of New Merchants Banks in Manchester Progressing

* * * * *



Construction View of Steel Framing

Building is steel and re-inforced concrete construction, to be faced with limestone and polished granite.

An interesting and very functional feature of the building is the drive-in window for the use of the public which is located on the west side of the building. Also included is ample parking space for the public and employees.

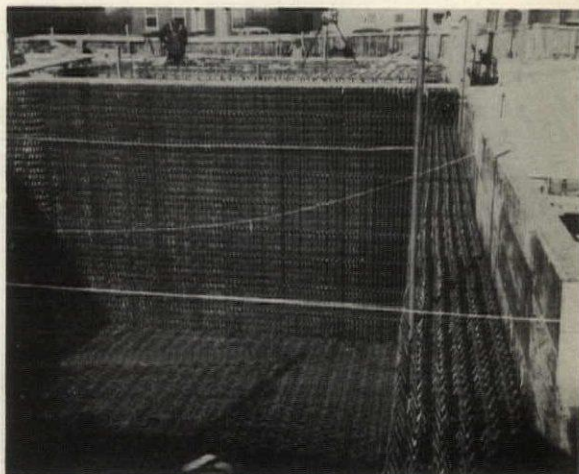
This picture of the vault construction shows the re-inforcing which is used in modern vault construction.

This gives a very good idea of the amount of steel required in a vault of this type.

New building for the Merchants National and Merchants Savings Bank, Manchester, N. H.

Carl E. Peterson, Architect.

General Contractor: Swanburg Construction Co.; Heating, Plumbing and Air Conditioning, John H. Stevens Co.; Electrical, John J. Reilly Co.



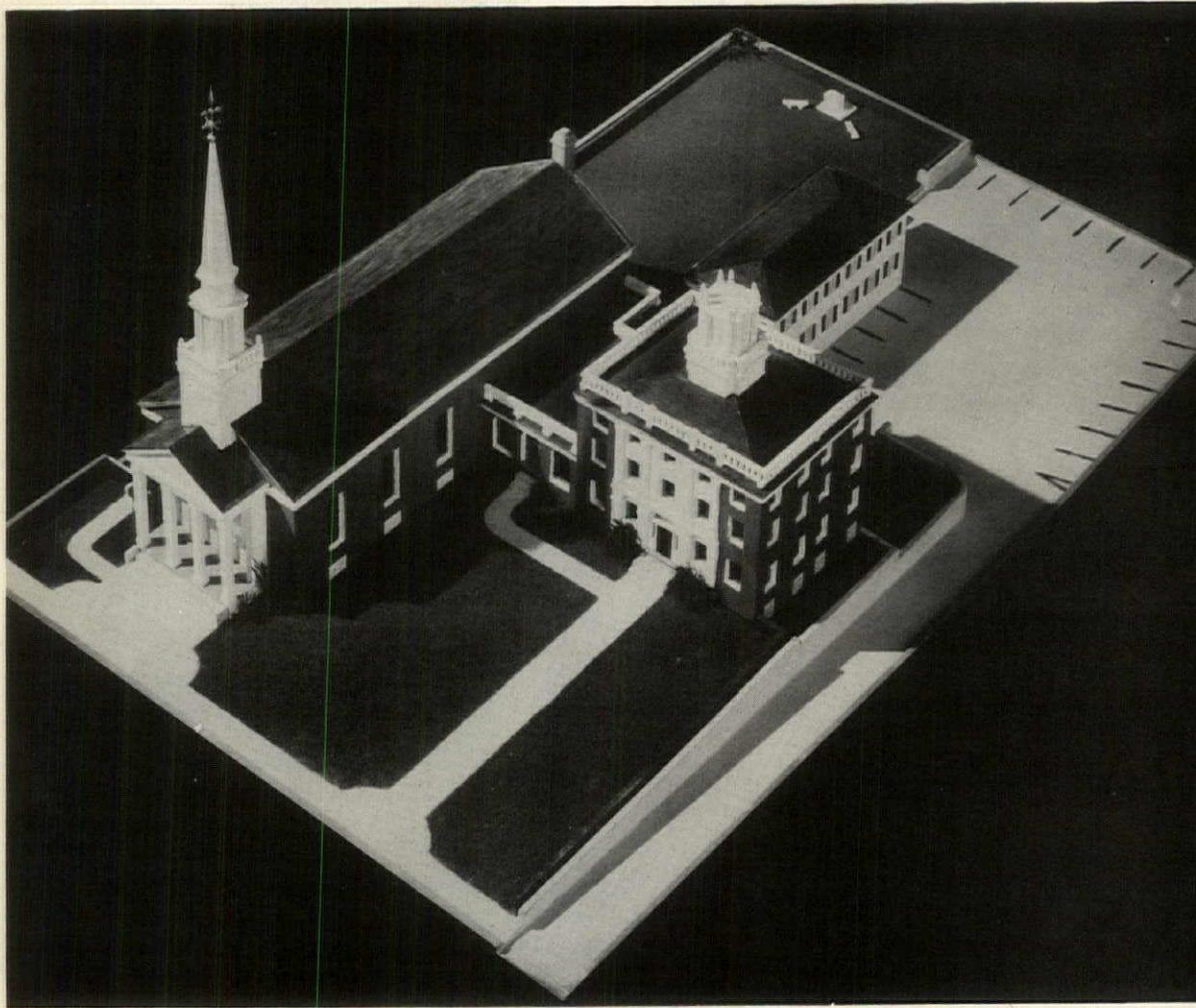
N. H. Society of Engineers Inspect Wilder Dam

On Saturday, May 5, the N. H. Society of Engineers had their spring meeting at the Hanover Inn. Attendance was good as was to be expected from the fine program, inspection tour of Wilder Dam, speeches by Dartmouth Professor Alan R. Foley and the Dartmouth Outing Club's Ross McKenney, and a good social hour and dinner at the Inn.

M.I.T. Club of N. H. hears discourse on "Jet Propulsion"

On Thursday, May 10, the M. I. T. Club of New Hampshire met at the Eagle Hotel in Concord to hear Professor Glenn C. Williams discourse on "Jet Propulsion." The meeting was presided over by Architect Eugene F. Magenau, retiring president. His vice-president was Commissioner Frank Merrill and Secretary-Treasurer was Senate President Blaylock Atherton.

Middle Street Baptist Church, Portsmouth, Under Construction



Harvey Studio, Boston, M

View of model made by Mr. Roland Hall, showing the complete layout for the Middle Street Baptist Church which is now under construction.

M. E. Witmer, Portsmouth, Architect.
E. L. Paterson and Son, Portsmouth, General Contractors.
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A sketch plan of the Church is also included on the opposite page showing the tire layout. Construction for this job was started October 1950.

Joint Meeting of A.I.A. and A.G.C.

The first joint meeting of the N. H. Chapter American Institute of Architects, and the Associated General Contractors of New Hampshire, was held at Yoken's, Portsmouth, N. H., on April 26, 1951.

Approximately ninety persons, including a group from the N. H. Society of Engineers, and guests, enjoyed an excellent dinner, preceded by an hour of fellowship.

Robert Foster, president of the A. G. C. of N. H. spoke briefly on the necessity of cooperative action by the industry and welcomed the architects, engineers, and guests to this joint meeting. President Maurice Witmer, of the N. H. Chapter A. I. A. expressed his appreciation for the opportunity and challenge which the meeting presented to the industry and urged that this type meeting be an annual affair.

Foster introduced Governor Sherman Adams who gave an excellent speech on the Public Works Program for the State of New Hampshire. He touched briefly on the serious implications of the removal of General McArthur on our over-all foreign policy, and commended Charles E. Wilson, Director of Mobilization, for the excellent job he has done under very trying circumstances. At the State level, Governor Adams pointed out the many advantages to the state of the reorganization act, and described the goal of the Public Works Department as established under this act. The use of competitive bidding to insure the lowest possible construction costs has been increased during Governor Adams administration, demonstrating the efficiency of the department's operation.

The Governor stated that the Highway Construction Program would be the largest in the State's history during the next five years. Federal regulations and restrictions may have a tendency to decrease the volume of state building construction during the next few years, but several projects are contemplated in the next five years, and the construction of the new state office building will be completed during the next biennium.

Governor Adams assured those in attendance that the use of competitive bidding would be encouraged, and in spite of the tremendous increase in highway construction fewer state personnel were employed in 1950 than in the previous year.

Among those present from the N. H. Public Works and Highway department were, John Morton, Deputy Commissioner; Robert Whitaker, Construction Engineer, and John Engel.

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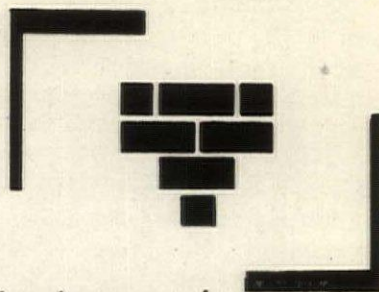
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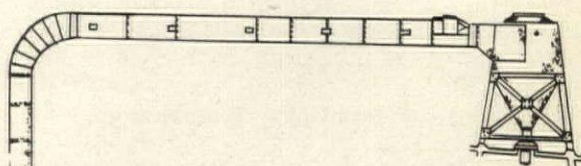
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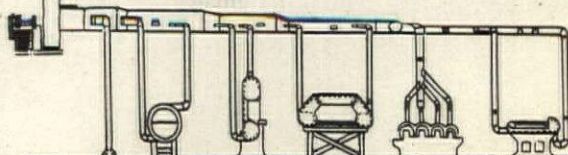
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THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS

It is quite evident that building construction in general, so far as civilian life is concerned, will sharply decline in the next year or two.

Restriction as to use of critical materials essential for a military economy will syphon off many of those items heretofore considered so necessary to good construction.

Architects not directly associated with construction in military projects will be put to a hard task again as was so evident at the beginning of every recent major war,—this may strike a note of despair to many as we have become so accustomed in being able to draw upon practically any media we desired for our use, many of which were brought from distant places of manufacture. This convenience of supply from distant parts has led to a blind obscuring of many materials and supplies immediately available nearby all of which are high in quality and obtainable without restrictive priorities, usable in practically every instance we demand.

This re-evaluation of our potential in supplies at home should quicken every one in the construction field and give exercise with new confidence of ingenuity in design and construction of our buildings projected for the days ahead.

The exodus of many fine architects from Europe while in the throes of economic and political upheaval which has shaken the continent these past three decades, many of whom are now prominent educators in our leading architectural schools here in America today,—have brought a new concept of values to us. Practically all of these men were amazed at our great waste of materials,—a waste alone which would have supplied amply all of Europe's needs. Their appreciation for the fitness of materials, wise use of space

and deploring unnecessary use of valuable natural resources, might well teach us a profitable lesson in the art of fine living under the strictest of economies.

What with our eastern lumber manufacturers—Brick kilns, Cement plants, Limestone, Gypsum from Nova Scotia, processed right here in New Hampshire, Slate, Marble, Granite, Nails, Bolts, Hardware, Plastics, Lumber, Leums, Synthetic rubber and scores of other items,—mined, quarried and milled right here in New England of sufficient abundance to not only meet any demand we could reasonably require for ourselves, but, also provide ample for assisting the essential economy of this country in critical times such as we are now within.

We have the materials and the men to substantially meet any extra burden cast upon us to bear,—without inflicting any appreciable difficulty in maintaining normal construction demands,—if, we are courageous and thoughtful enough to acquaint ourselves with the facts and tell our clients how the problems can be met in an economy such as we are now encountering.

The shift to new conditions may be sudden and sometimes, painful, these difficulties may be by no means as tough as an empty stomach because of lacking employment.

I will win while I may fail.

